

The Gospel of John

Lesson 7

John 9:1 - John 10:42

Leaving the temple on the last day of the Feast of Booths, October AD 28

John 9:1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.

The Jewish leadership has picked up stones intending to kill Jesus, but He simply passes by them and exits the temple. On the way out, He passes a blind man and heals him; it is the Sabbath once again, and, once again, the Sanhedrin is furious.

Healing of the blind man

John 9:2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" **3** Jesus answered, "*It was neither that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was so* that the works of God might be displayed in him. **4** "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work. **5** "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." **6** When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, **7** and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came back seeing. **8** Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?" **9** Others were saying, "This is he," *still* others were saying, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the one." **10** So they were saying to him, "How then were your eyes opened?" **11** He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight." **12** They said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

It is not the fault of the blind man who he hasn't been able to see since birth; no sin of his can be blamed for his malady. Neither is it the sin of his parents; blindness from birth in a child is not a punishment for parental sin. This man is part of God's eternal plan; he has been blind from birth to display the mighty works of God to an unbelieving nation, a godless people. Just a few minutes before in the temple, Jesus had taught that He is the light of the world; now He is proving it by showing the light of day to a man who has lived his life in darkness since birth.

The crowd is amazed and wants to know the location of Jesus. It is interesting that they ask the man to identify his Healer. He has not been in the presence of Jesus since the clay was placed on his eyes, and he had to go to the pool to wash it off before receiving his sight. Jesus could have been standing beside him and he would not have known Him.

Blind man before the Pharisees

John 9:13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind. **14** Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. **15** Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, "He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see." **16** Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such

signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷ So they said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸ The Jews then did not believe *it* of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight, ¹⁹ and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?" ²⁰ His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹ but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself." ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. ²³ For this reason his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." ²⁴ So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He then answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ So they said to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear *it* again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?" ²⁸ They reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ "We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from." ³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes. ³¹ "We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him. ³² "Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ "If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" So they put him out.

The Pharisees are so caught up in their Sabbath regulations that they cannot see the great good accomplished in the blind man's life. Stymied by their Sabbath rites, the Sanhedrin doubts that he has suffered from life-long blindness, and calls for the testimony of his parents to verify the information. The parents are astounded that their son can see but are unwilling to answer the Pharisees directly. Why will they not give an answer? They are afraid of being put out of the synagogue permanently because the Pharisees have threatened the loss of services provided by the organization. They have also threatened to remove anyone from the synagogue who confesses Jesus to be the Christ. In spite of their refusal to answer, the parents have undercut the system of the Sanhedrin.

Likewise, the blind man's answers undercut the belief system of the Sanhedrin. His personal testimony cannot be contradicted, so the leaders attack him personally, claiming he is a sinner, born in sin and living in sin. With that indictment upon him, they will not listen to another word from his lips. Even though they are unable to refute his testimony, they expel him from the synagogue.

Jesus asks the blind man about the Son of Man

John ^{9:35} Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." ³⁸ And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him. ³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

Jesus approaches the blind man who does not know that He is the one who healed him. Jesus asks if he trusts the Son of Man, a term the Jews understand to mean the Messiah. The blind man definitely believes in the Son of Man. Jesus introduces himself as that person, and the blind man bows to worships Him.

Shepherd or thief, they do not understand

John 10:1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. **2** "But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. **3** "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4** "When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. **5** "A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers." **6** This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.

Many wish to be leaders in the Lord's business, but there is a proper way to obtain that leadership position, and the Pharisees have not entered the correct door. They have robbed the people of the true Shepherd. When the true Shepherd opens the door and calls for His sheep, they will run to Him because they know His voice. Sheep who do not belong to the Lord will not run to Him because they do not belong to Him. If a false shepherd calls for the Lord's sheep, they will not follow him. As plain as Jesus' words are, the Pharisees do not understand because they do not belong to Him or know His voice.

Jesus' explanation

John 10:7 So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. **8** "All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. **9** "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. **10** "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly. **11** "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.⁹⁸ **12** "He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. **13** "He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. **14** "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, **15** even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

Jesus is the way, the door, the only entrance to eternal life; Judaism is not. It will not change a single thing for the good of a person's soul. Judaism will not protect and care for those whom they claim to oversee. The purpose of the leadership of the Jews is to guarantee its survival, not the survival of their flock.

Other sheep

John 10:16 "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd.⁹⁹

Jesus did not come to be the door only for Judaism; He came for the souls of the entire world. The Pharisees will never accept a Savior who also offers salvation to the Gentiles.

⁹⁸ Psalm 23

⁹⁹ Ezekiel 34:23

Prophecy of death

John ^{10:17} "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. ¹⁸ "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

Jesus says that because He has come to earth to gather all the sheep who belong to Him, the Father loves Him. Jesus now foretells His death again, saying it is His choice to die for mankind.

Division among Jews

John ^{10:19} A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" ²¹ Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"

The Sanhedrin is now divided; some believe in the Lord and some do not. The healing of the blind man is conclusive evidence of who He is and from where he comes.

John leaves the story at this point, failing to report the Lord's continued ministry in Galilee in AD 29. The ministry is relatively quiet for Jesus with only 26 events recorded by Luke, and nothing recorded by John until the Feast of Dedication in December; however, the events of AD 29 are sufficient to stir the anger of the Jews enough to plot to kill Him by any means possible.

List of events in the life of Jesus from the other Gospels not included in John's Gospel

EVENT	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
Jesus sends out the seventy.	Luke 10:1-16
The seventy return.	Luke 10:17-20
Jesus rejoices.	Luke 10:21-22
Jesus blesses the apostles.	Luke 10:23-24
The lawyers test Jesus.	Luke 25:28
Jesus tells about the good Samaritan.	Luke 10:29-37
Jesus visits Mary and Martha.	Luke 10:38-42
Jesus teaches how to pray.	Luke 11:1-13
Jesus teaches about the blasphemy and the demons.	Luke 11:14-26
Mary is blessed by a woman.	Luke 11:27-28
Jesus teaches about the sign of Jonah.	Luke 11:27-28
Jesus teaches that the lamp of the body is the eye.	Luke 11:33-36
Jesus eats lunch with the Pharisee.	Luke 11:37
Jesus warns of the woes of the Pharisees.	Luke 11:39-44
Jesus warns of the woes of the lawyers.	Luke 11:45-52
Jesus leaves and they plot against Him.	Luke 11:53-54
Jesus teaches a large crowd.	Luke 12:1-12
Jesus warns about greed.	Luke 12:13-15
Jesus tells parables about being ready.	Luke 12:16-40
Peter has a question.	Luke 12:41
Jesus teaches more parables.	Luke 12:42-59
The fate of the Galileans is reported to Jesus.	Luke 13:1-5
Jesus tells the parable of the fig tree.	Luke 13:6-9
The woman is healed on the Sabbath.	Luke 13:10-13
The synagogue officials oppose Jesus.	Luke 13:14-17
Jesus tells the parable of the mustard seed and leaven.	Luke 13: 18-21

Feast of Dedication, December AD 29

John 10:22 At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; ²³ it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.

Even though it is winter, Jesus is on the portico of Solomon, a porch that Herod the Great designed to surround the Temple during his renovations that began in 20 BC and will continue until AD 64.

Jews gather around

John 10:24 The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. ²⁶ "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. ²⁷ "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ "My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ "I and the Father are one."

On the porch, the Sanhedrin begs Him to reveal if He is the Messiah (Christ). He has already told them enough to confirm His Messiahship, but most still do not believe Him. Jesus repeats His claims that He has sheep who know His voice, that he will give them eternal salvation and that no one can take His sheep away from Him. The sheep belong to Jesus and they also belong to the Father because He and the Father are one God.

Attempted stoning for blasphemy

John 10:31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. ³² Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" ³³ The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."

Jesus has told them what they want to know, and now, the Sanhedrin is prepared to stone Him for blasphemy. Below is the passage where the Sanhedrin confirms that Jesus has claimed to be God. Therefore, in their eyes, He is now guilty and should die.

Psalm 82:6

John 10:34 Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I SAID, YOU ARE GODS'? ³⁵ "If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), ³⁶ do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? ³⁷ "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; ³⁸ but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

Jesus is meeting the Sanhedrin on its own turf in its own way by referring to the true Law as spoken by God. He is referring to the following passage.

Psalm 82:1 God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. ² How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Selah. ³ Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. ⁴ Rescue the weak and needy; Deliver *them* out of the hand of the wicked. ⁵ They do not know nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. ⁶ I said, "You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most

High. ⁷ "Nevertheless you will die like men and fall like any one of the princes." ⁸
Arise, O God, judge the earth! For it is You who possesses all the nations.

Then Jewish leaders were wicked and out of control when this psalm was written. God calls them "gods" because of the way they are lording over those they should be protecting. Jesus' reference to this passage is not taken as a compliment; they know He is associating them with the evil leadership of that day. His reference to the past is taken as a threat on their lives just as the psalm was a threat on the lives of the judges in the day of the psalm.

Attempted arrest of Jesus

John ^{10:39} Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

Even though they want to kill Him now, the time has not come for Jesus to die. Therefore, Jesus slips away from them easily and travels to the place where John the Baptist had begun his ministry three years before.

Beyond the Jordan, John's testimony

John ^{10:40} And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. ⁴¹ Many came to Him and were saying, "While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." ⁴² Many believed in Him there.

While He is staying across the Jordan River, many come to Him and believe. This place still holds great memories of John the Baptist's ministry. Nothing miraculous had occurred in the Baptist's work; his purpose was simply to point people to the Savior. It was their decision to accept or reject Him.

It is four months until the Lord's death, and Luke records His ministry from late December of AD 29 to the resurrection of Lazarus sometime in January or February.

List of events in the life of Jesus from the other Gospels not included in John's Gospel

EVENT	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
Jesus travels towards Jerusalem.	Luke 13:22
How many will be saved?	Luke 13:23-30
The Pharisees warn Jesus about Herod.	Luke 13:31-35
Jesus stays in the Pharisees house.	Luke 14:1
Jesus heals the man of the dropsy.	Luke 14:2-6
Jesus tells the parable of the guests.	Luke 14:7-11
Jesus tells the parable of the host of the feast.	Luke 14:12-14
Jesus tells the parable of the dinner.	Luke 14:15-24
A great multitude travels with Jesus.	Luke 14:25
There is a cost for following Jesus.	Luke 14:25-35
Jesus eats with the tax collectors and sinners.	Luke 15:1-2
Jesus tells the parable of the lost sheep.	Luke 15:3-32
Jesus tells the parable of the unrighteous stewards.	Luke 16:1-13
The Pharisees scoff at His teaching on divorce.	Luke 16:14-18
Jesus tells the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.	Luke 16:19-31
Jesus instructs the apostles.	Luke 17:1-10